3: Mariner F-5 (1806-1810) 1818
0U9 Tonga 0U9

that there was very little public utility in what was supposed to be the divine authority of Tooitonga; but that it was, on the contrary, a great and useless expense to the people. This measure, as may be imagined, did not prove very objectionable to the *wishes* of the multitude, as it relieved them from the *inachi*, a very heavy tax; and, in times of scarcity, of course extremely oppressive. In regard to the religious objections which one might suppose would be started against the endeavour to set aside an institution so ancient, so venerable, and so sacred, as that of Tooitonga's divine authority,—it must be noticed that the island of Tonga had, for many years, been deprived of the power, presence, and influence of Tooitonga, owing to its political situation; and, notwithstanding, appeared in the eyes of Finow, and of all his chiefs, warriors, and subjects, to be not less favoured with the bounties of heaven and of nature than the other islands, excepting the mischief and destruction which arose from human passion and disturbances: and if Tonga could exist without this divine chief, why not Vavaoo, or any other island? This strong argument growing still stronger, upon a little reflection, brought the chiefs, matabooles, and older members of society, to the resolution, that Tooitonga was of no use at all; and the people

3: Mariner F-5 (1806-1810) 1818
OU9 Tonga OU9

themselves, ever willing to fall into measures that greatly promote their interest, notwithstanding a few religious scruples, very soon came to be of the same opinion too.

As soon as Finow had come to this determination,[A] and to that of shutting up all communication with the Hapai people, it became necessary to acquaint Tongamana, at his next arrival, with this new regulation, and to forbid him ever to return to Vavaoo again. In the mean time, however, as Finow had promised Tooi Bolotoo that his daughter (Mr. Mariner's adopted mother) should be allowed to proceed to him at the Hapais, she was ordered to get herself and attendants ready to accompany Tongamana on his way back. Now it happened this person had a great number of female attendants, many of whom were some of the handsomest women at Vavaoo; and, as the leave granted to her to depart was equally a licence for the departure of her attendants, Finow became apprehensive that the alienation of so many fine women from the country would occasion considerable discontent among his young men, and would perhaps tempt some of them to take the same step. He sent, however, for Máfi Hábe, and told her, that, with her leave, he would contrive some means to keep back her women, whose departure might occasion so much disturbance: in

A [to have no more Tui Tongas--Analyst]

14: Thomson G-3 (1886-1891) 1894
OU9 Tonga OU9

344 In Government House there were traces of a weather-board bungalow, but the shingles had long ago rotted away, and been replaced from time to time with odd scraps of galvanised iron, rust-eaten through and through. The verandah posts had fallen, bringing down the roof with them, and the gaps in the flooring were mended with
342 bits of an old canoe. But dilapidated as the house of his Majesty's representative was, it was a mansion in comparison to that of the Minister of Finance in Nukualofa, which seemed only to hold together to clear the character of its owner from any suspicion that an empty treasury might reasonably attach to him.

645 It now transpired that Tukuaho had in his suite a
203 couple of spies devoted to his interests, whose business
[208] was to loaf into the houses of their acquaintances and gauge public opinion. One of them, Peter Vi, would have surpassed even the "Sham Squire" if they had been contemporaries. His fat empty face and rotund person disarmed suspicion; and he had besides an odour of the cloth about him, for his father and grandfather were both
793 reverend pillars of the Free Church. The latter, indeed,
[291] was the oldest native minister, and a contemporary of the king. He paid us a visit in a hand-cart soon after we arrived, with a black coat over his *vala*, and a tall hat, carefully brushed the wrong way, upon his reverend head. The poor old gentleman had lost the use of his lower limbs and of part of his intellect; but he said a prayer over us, and went his way, leaving a vapour of respectability behind him which doubtless served to rehabilitate such disreputable politicians as we were believed to be: for although his son, as a Free Church minister, is dis-

14: Thomson G-3 (1886-1891) 1894
OU9 Tonga OU9

645 were still in a good humour, we were to urge upon him
643 the necessity of returning to Tongatabu to hold a great
651 meeting of the people, and order them to pay their taxes.
624 We sat on far into the night, discussing our plan of cam-
625 paign between the bowls of kava, until the Head Jailer
203 and the Sub-Inspector of Police, both malcontents, came
in, ostensibly to do us honour, but in reality to hear us
203 talk and spread the news. But when they had all gone
Peter's moon-face clouded, and he whispered his dire
208 tidings into Tukuaho's willing ear. The town was sus-
829 picious and uncomfortable. "Tukuaho sits all day with
609 the white man writing. Let them write on. The coun-
186 try will not be lost to us by writings. There will be war
before that happens."

14: Thomson G-3 (1886-1891) 1894
OU9 Tonga OU9

only the women had been impressed, but now the men's set faces relaxed, and there was a chorus of "*Malo!*") But that was not all. There were some perhaps who loved the man who was gone. Well—he was not there to speak ill of the absent, but he would say this, that the accounts were now being audited, and that some very strange things were coming to light. Did they think that any Tongan could thread the dark passages of such cunning? No. The king knew that when he asked for a white man to be sent to audit the accounts, and to make the dark ways plain. He was present, sitting at his side. (I tried to look unconscious.) In six short months he would leave them: it would be useless for them to ask him to stay longer—he could not. But he (Tukuaho) was there to-night to speak of his soul, and not of politics. What had politics to do with a church in which before God all men were equal? It was true that his soul was pained, but he had at least the comfort of knowing that he was doing his duty.

Before the applause had subsided Fatafehi was on his feet.

"I hear that you are all angry with me. Very well: that's your affair. But what is it about?" He laughed—not his hereditary laugh, but a less pleasant sound. "I will tell you why you are angry," he went on, and lashed the mischief-makers with great vehemence, not even deigning to end his speech with a devotional peroration.

"There will be less foolish talk to-morrow," said Tukuaho as we came away. "It was a good *bolotu*, only I am sorry that Fatafehi's words were so hot."

As soon as we reached home the spies were set in

14: Thomson G-3 (1886-1891) 1894
OU9 Tonga OU9

motion to feel the pulse of the people after their dose of tonic.

Besides a pleasurable excitement the *bolotu* supplies the place of the confessional, though, owing to its publicity, the sins confessed are generally the more venial slips of omission rather than of commission. But not always. Tradition has it that the unregenerate Mary Butako, when

"When Mary 'told her soul.'"

past her first youth, showed leanings towards repentance and there was dire consternation among the men of Sawana. They took heart, however, when it was found that though she attended every *bolotu*, yet she never was moved to "tell her soul." A night came at last when the enthusiasm passed the bounds. The acclamations were mingled with the sobs of the penitents overwhelmed with a sense of their sin, and in the midst Mary was seen

14: Thomson G-3 (1886-1891) 1894
OU9 Tonga OU9

VII.

MEETINGS ORDINARY AND EXTRAORDINARY.

THE politics of Tonga are a never-ending struggle between the *faikava* and the *fono*. In the intervals of the solemn ceremony of kava-drinking the most outrageous scandal is talked, the most startling lies invented,—for kava loosens the tongue-strings without muddling the senses. Were it less cheering and more inebriating it would be politically innocuous, for it is easier to govern a nation of drunkards than a people suffering from the diseased garrulity born of the pepper-root. Kava is drunk in every village in Tonga at least once a-day. Beside the door-post in every house lie the flat and the round pounding-stones whitened with the dusty fibres; and at each gathering, failing the moral character of an absent friend, politics, or church matters—which are so interlaced with politics that they are the more dangerous of the two—are the subject of conversation. To purify the air of the cloud of lies and miscomprehension that the *faikavas* have discharged into it, periodical *fonos* are necessary.

A *fono* is a compulsory meeting of the people to listen to the orders of some person in authority. Before Chris-

14: Thomson G-3 (1886-1891) 1894
OU9 Tonga OU9

tianity changed the face of the land the *fono* took the place of written law. The *matabules*, hereditary censors of public morals, summoned a *fono* to lecture the young chiefs whenever they had made a wider breach of the proprieties than their rank permitted. Nowadays its uses are various. In every village at six o'clock on Monday mornings there are *fonos*, at which the mayor reads out Government orders, and urges diligence on the defaulting taxpayers. There are Premier's *fonos* and king's *fonos*, the latter being very solemn functions, only adopted in cases of great national importance; but in all *fonos* alike no discussion is allowed, and the people are only summoned to hear what those set in authority choose to tell them.

The chief's orders of old were published abroad by the crier (*fanongonongo*), and this custom is revived whenever Government orders have to be proclaimed without the formality of a public meeting; but this time-honoured method is not often resorted to on account of the inaccuracy to which the human memory is subject. When Mr Baker promulgated his Wild Birds Protection Act, he instructed the criers to cry the preamble and a *résumé* of the Act—That whereas certain birds, particularly specified, were of public utility as the destroyers of worms, fleas, and other noxious insects, they were not to be killed on pain of heavy penalties. But the crier's version was: "Hear me, all people. It is the command of the Government—worms, fleas, and all creeping things are useful, so also are birds, therefore it is ordained that they shall not die; whosoever shall kill any bug, or flea, or worm, or bird, or other such thing, shall be grievously punished." It is right to say that the Tongans received the order

14: Thomson G-3 (1886-1891) 1894
OU9 Tonga OU9

without surprise, for the protection of insects seemed to them quite as reasonable as the protection of birds, or indeed as any other of Mr Baker's statutes.

On our return to Tongatabu we found the air surcharged with the gossip of the *faikava*. Two noblemen and the Government bandmaster, all disaffected for different reasons, had filled the islands with a story that ran as follows: "The Government was lying when it said that it was in want of money, for had not the Premier, when he opened the Treasury, found a bag containing a hundred thousand sovereigns, and hidden them for the use of the Cabinet Ministers? Was he not deceiving the people when he told them to pay their taxes, or their country would be ruined?" "Mr Baker has gone to America, and has told the President what Britain has done, and he will come back in an American man-of-war to try the High Commissioner, and punish his enemies." "A British official is in Tonga to pay Tukuaho for betraying the country, and to arrange for annexation." It was plain that a *fono* must be held to cleanse the political atmosphere.

My colleague did not dare to summon the entire island to a *fono* without the express sanction of the king, so he determined to assemble the mayors from every village, knowing that they would carry an embroidered version of his speech to their constituents. Shortly after sunrise on the appointed day horsemen poured into the town, and tethered their horses outside the disused church at Pangai whither we were called to address them. As we entered the building at the pulpit end a policeman cried "*Koe Palemia*," and the mayors rose and saluted

14: Thomson G-3 (1886-1891) 1894
OU9 Tonga OU9

825 frequented some *Toa*-trees near to the sea, but the great battle fought there in May 1799 frightened them away, and they chose to emigrate to the large trees in the centre of the town. Ata told me that at sunset half go away to feed, while the others keep guard during their absence, but that they never fail to come back about midnight to take their turn of sentry-duty. Without vouching for this as a scientific fact, I can bear witness that they fly beyond Nukualofa, thirteen miles away, for hundreds of them were shot at nightfall as they flew in a continuous string towards the Government banana plantations near the lagoon. One thus brought down had a little one clinging to her body, befurred and bewinged, a perfect miniature of its mother. In a few days it became perfectly tame, and at night showed no inclination to leave the verandah where it hung in the daytime.

621 The *fono* was held opposite Ata's house. Only tax-
645 payers were summoned, but they numbered several hun-
● 208 dreds, and included a few women—widows—holding tax-
203 allotments. They formed a compact semicircle, each bringing a cocoa-nut-leaf to sit upon. On the outside of the ring a few policemen, armed with thick batons, stood [195] erect in attitudes of stern attention. We, the authorities, sat in a row in the verandah and addressed the crowd in turn,—Tukuaho in mood of suave conditional, I in bald indicative, and Ata, their chief, in uncompromising im- [651] perative. Taxes,—we must have taxes, or—many terrible [651] things would happen. Tonga would lose her independence for one thing, and the police would come and sell by auction the property of defaulters for another. I am bound to confess that the latter threat appeared to be the more

14: Thomson G-3 (1886-1891) 1894
OU9 Tonga OU9

dire of the two. Having lunched at the sacred enclosure of Kanokubolu, the scene of the massacre in 1800 in which the recreant missionary Vason took part, we rode off along the shore, leaving Tungi to water the seed we had sown.

The meeting at Mua was a far more picturesque affair. Five or six hundred people were assembled in a wide circle, six deep, under the shade of the historical banyan-trees beneath which Captain Cook sat when he witnessed the Great Inaji on the 17th June 1777.[1] Acting on my colleague's advice, I gave some sensational instances of the squandering of money by our predecessor, and this part of my speech was listened to with breathless attention. As I told of the sums spent on cab-hire in Auckland, on boots and shoes, and on strong liquors, even Mr Baker's supporters looked discomfited. It was curious to note the alteration in Tukuaho's style when addressing his own people at Mua. Elsewhere his style was persuasive: here he took no trouble to give reasons or explanations. He simply asserted facts, and his people accepted them. He is a fine speaker, less polished in delivery than his shrewd old father, Tungi, but more manly and open. The audience was enthusiastic—even old Nuku cried "*Malo!*" as if he had forgotten that he was in disgrace. He had advised his people not to pay their taxes, an offence that would have landed him in jail if he had been less aristocratic; but being a member of the Upper House, he could be threatened only with impeachment for conduct unbecoming a *Nobele*. I watched him carefully at this meeting, and decided that he was mad, but not sufficiently so to be harmless, for he is an inveterate talker. When Tongan

[1] See illustration on p. 317.

14: Thomson G-3 (1886-1891) 1894
OU9 Tonga OU9

565 troubles were at their worst in 1886 Nuku held a *fono*,
646 and thus addressed his people:—

565 "All the great nations of the earth have made treaties
646 with Tonga. We have a treaty with Germany, a treaty of
829 mutual love and respect. We have a treaty with France: this is for the mutual protection of religion. We have a treaty with America: this is to secure freedom of trade, so that a Tongan may go and sell things in America, just as an American may come and sell things in Tonga. And we have a treaty with Britain, but *that* is a very different thing: Tonga and Britain are like two cocks, each standing on his own dunghill, trying to raise his head above the other and crow him down!"

645 The *fono* at Nukualofa was held at sunrise, and I was
621 awakened by an excited policeman who came to say that
208 chiefs and people were assembled and waiting for me.
203 Launched hungry, sleepy, and uncomfortable upon an audience tired of waiting, I did not make a brilliant speech.

By holding these *fonos* we had now done all that lay in our power to hasten the payment of taxes pending the
651 arrival of the king from Vavau. We were in great straits
652 for want of money, for we had undertaken to pay the salaries regularly from the day on which we assumed office, and hitherto not a penny of poll-tax had been taken
[439] at the windows. The Government was being carried on with the Customs dues alone, which, regular though they were, did not suffice to meet the current demands upon
645 the Treasury, exclusive of salaries. But we could do no more, and it was high time to agree upon the line of policy to be pursued to promote unanimity among our-